

**Case 3272*****Microsaurus* Dejean, 1833 (Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation of usage by designation of *Staphylinus ochripennis* Ménériés, 1832 as the type species**

Ales Smetana

*Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Central Experimental Farm, K.W. Neatby Bldg., Ottawa, ON K1A 0C6, Canada (e-mail: smetanaa@agr.gc.ca)*

**Abstract.** The purpose of this application, in relation to Article 70 of the Code, is to conserve the widespread usage of the generic name *Microsaurus* Dejean, 1833 for a group of rove beetles (family STAPHYLINIDAE) by designating *Staphylinus ochripennis* Ménériés, 1832 as the type species of *Microsaurus* in place of *Staphylinus lateralis* Gravenhorst, 1802. Members of the genus *Microsaurus* are north temperate in distribution, with the majority of species occurring in the Palearctic Region. The conservation of the long-standing usage of *Microsaurus* is required for the upcoming publication of the second volume of *The Catalogue of Palearctic Coleoptera*. *Quedius fissus*, *Q. latinus*, *Q. lateralis*, *Q. scheerpeltzi* (with synonym *Q. cyprinus*) and *Q. suramensis* (with synonym *Q. grouziacus*) are transferred from *Microsaurus* to *Raphirus* Stephens, 1829.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Coleoptera; STAPHYLINIDAE; *Microsaurus*; *Microsaurus ochripennis*; rove beetles; Holarctic; Palearctic.

---

1. Dejean (1833, p. 61) introduced the generic name *Microsaurus* for a group of rove beetles (family STAPHYLINIDAE) and included 11 available specific names, of which only three (*Staphylinus lateralis* Gravenhorst, 1802, *Staphylinus ochripennis* Ménériés, 1832 (p. 145) and *Staphylinus scitus* Gravenhorst, 1806) currently remain in *Microsaurus*.

2. Westwood (1838, p. 16) subsequently designated one of the originally included species, *Staphylinus lateralis* Gravenhorst, 1802, as the type species of *Microsaurus*.

3. Stephens (1829, p. 23) established the rove beetle genus *Raphirus*, and Mulsant & Rey (1876, p. 616) established the rove beetle genus *Sauridus*. Both of these genera were subsequently included, together with *Microsaurus*, as subgenera of *Quedius* Stephens, 1829. Traditionally these three subgenera were distinguished by relative eye size until Smetana (1971, p. 184), showing this character to be inadequate for distinguishing between the three subgenera when considered in isolation from other characters, synonymized *Sauridus* with *Raphirus*.

4. Smetana (1988, p. 183) pointed out that all *Microsaurus* have two setiferous punctures posteromedial of the posterior frontal puncture on the head, whereas all *Raphirus* have only one setiferous puncture at this location. This character state is a reliable distinguishing character of the two subgenera irrespective of the size of the eyes (see Smetana, 1997, p. 51).

5. Since *Staphylinus lateralis* Gravenhorst, 1802 (p. 35), the type species of *Microsaurus*, has only one setiferous puncture in the location on the head (see para. 4 above), it has to be transferred to *Raphirus*, along with the following members of the *Quedius lateralis*-species group. These are: *Q. fissus* Gridelli, 1938, *Q. latinus* Gridelli, 1938, *Q. scheerpeltzi* Gridelli, 1938 (with its synonym *Q. cyprinus* Franz, 1987) and *Q. suramensis* Eppelsheim, 1880 (with its synonym *Q. grouziacus* Coiffait, 1966).

6. If the validly designated type species of *Microsaurus*, *Staphylinus lateralis*, remains the type species of *Microsaurus*, *Microsaurus* would become a junior synonym of *Raphirus* and the name *Ediquus* Mulsant & Rey, 1876 would replace *Microsaurus*. This would cause great confusion as the name *Ediquus* Mulsant & Rey, 1876 has not been used as a valid name for over 40 years and has a homonym *Ediquus* Reitter, 1887 (Coleoptera) (although this was replaced by the name *Farus* by Blackwelder in 1952, p. 165). Both *Microsaurus* and *Raphirus* have a long history of use in their current meaning, with each name being used by well over 20 authors since they were introduced (see Herman, 2001, pp. 3089–3090, for details) and these changes would seriously affect the nomenclatural stability of the group.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to set aside all previous fixations of type species for the nominal genus *Microsaurus* Dejean, 1833 and to designate *Staphylinus ochripennis* Ménériés, 1832 as the type species;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Microsaurus* Dejean, 1833 (gender: masculine), type species *Staphylinus ochripennis* Ménériés, 1832 as ruled in (1) above;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *ochripennis* Ménériés, 1832, as published in the binomen *Staphylinus ochripennis* (specific name of the type species of *Microsaurus* Dejean, 1833).

### Acknowledgement

I thank Lee H. Herman (American Museum of Natural History, New York) for reviewing an earlier draft of this paper. \*

### References

- Blackwelder, R.E. 1952. The generic names of the beetle family Staphylinidae, with an essay on genotypy. *Bulletin of the United States National Museum*, **200**: 1–483.
- Coiffait, H. 1966. *Quedius* nouveaux. 5e note sur le genre *Quedius*. *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire Naturelle de Toulouse*, **105**: 44–54.
- Dejean, P.F.M.A. 1833. *Catalogue des Coléoptères de la collection de M. le Comte Dejean*. 176 pp. Méquignon-Marvis, Paris.
- Eppelsheim, E. 1880. Ueber vicarirende Flügeldeckenfarbung bei den Quedien. *Mittheilungen der Schweizerischen Entomologischen Gesellschaft*, **5**: 577–586.
- Franz, H. 1987. Beitrag zur Koleopterenfauna Cyperns. *Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Mathematisch-naturwissenschaftliche Klasse*, Abteilung 1, **196**: 67–87.
- Gravenhorst, J.L.C. 1802. *Coleoptera Microptera Brunsvicensia* . . . lxxvi, 207 pp. Reichard, Brunsvigae.
- Gravenhorst, J.L.C. 1806. *Monographia Coleopterorum Micropteronum*. 248 pp. Dieterich, Gottingae.

- Gridelli, E.** 1938. Studi sul genere *Quedius* Steph. *Bollettino della Società Entomologica Italiana*, **70**: 6–19.
- Herman, L.** 2001. Catalog of the Staphylinidae (Insecta: Coleoptera). 1758 to the end of the second millennium. *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, **265**: 1–4218.
- Ménétriés, E.** 1832. *Catalogue raisonné des objets de zoologie recueillis dans un voyage au Caucase* . . . 271, xxxii, iv pp. L'Académie Impériale des Sciences, St. Petersburg.
- Mulsant, E. & Rey, C.** 1876. Tribu des brévipennes. [Staphyliniens]. *Annales de la Société d'Agriculture, Histoire Naturelle et Arts utiles de Lyon*, (4)**8**: 145–856.
- Reitter, E.** 1887. Insecta in itinere Cl. N. Przewalskii in Asia centrali novissime lecta. VI. Clavicornia, Lamellicornia et Serricornia. *Horae Societatis Entomologicae Rossicae*, **21**: 201–234.
- Smetana, A.** 1971. Revision of the tribe Quediini of America North of Mexico (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae). *Memoirs of the Entomological Society of Canada*, **79**: i–vi, 1–303.
- Smetana, A.** 1988. Revision of the tribes Quediini and Atanygnathini. Part II. The Himalayan region (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae). *Quaestiones Entomologicae*, **24**: 163–464.
- Smetana, A.** 1997. Contributions to the knowledge of the Quediina (Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Staphylinini) of China. Part 6. Genus *Quedius* Stephens, 1829. Subgenus *Microsaurus* Dejean, 1833. Section 5. *Bulletin of the National Science Museum*, (A)**23**: 51–68.
- Stephens, J.F.** 1829. The nomenclature of British insects; being a compendious list . . . 68 pp. Baldwin & Cradock, London.
- Westwood, J.O.** 1838. Synopsis of the genera of British insects. Pp. 1–48 in Westwood, J.O. (Ed.). *An introduction to the modern classification* . . . Longman, Orme, Brown, Green & Longman, London.

Acknowledgement of receipt of this application was published in BZN **60**: 94.

---

Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., c/o The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: iczn@nhm.ac.uk).